



JOURNEY TO STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS

STAR WARS

SHATTERED EMPIRE



MARVEL

004

RUCKA
CHECCHETTO
MOSSA

SHATTERED EMPIRE

Part IV

The Battle of Endor is now three months in the past. Word of the Rebel Alliance victory and the death of Emperor Palpatine continues to spread slowly throughout the galaxy, its progress impaired by the endless propaganda of the Galactic Empire. Nonetheless, in many quarters, the Empire continues exactly as it did before, and the war continues to rage.

A contingency plan known as OPERATION: CINDER has been activated by the Emperor's death to exact vengeance against the his enemies, as well as to preserve the secrets, treasures, and knowledge of the SITH LORD. Countless worlds throughout the Outer Rim have suffered devastating attacks as Imperial remnants hurry to fulfill their late master's will.

The elation of the rebel victory is now just a fading memory, lost in the wake of nonstop combat operations against the Imperial remnants. For many of the rebels, the dream of laying down their arms and living in peace seems further away than the elation of victory promised....

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Rebel Fleet Command. Muster Point: Stalwart.



...ONGOING
IMPERIAL OPERATIONS
TARGETING **ANOTHER**
DOZEN WORLDS...



...BURNIN KONN, CADOVANT,
ABEDNEDO, AND COMMENOR
AMONGST THEM.

SOME OF
THESE APPEAR TO BE
SOLELY **PUNITIVE** ON
THE PART OF THE
EMPIRE...

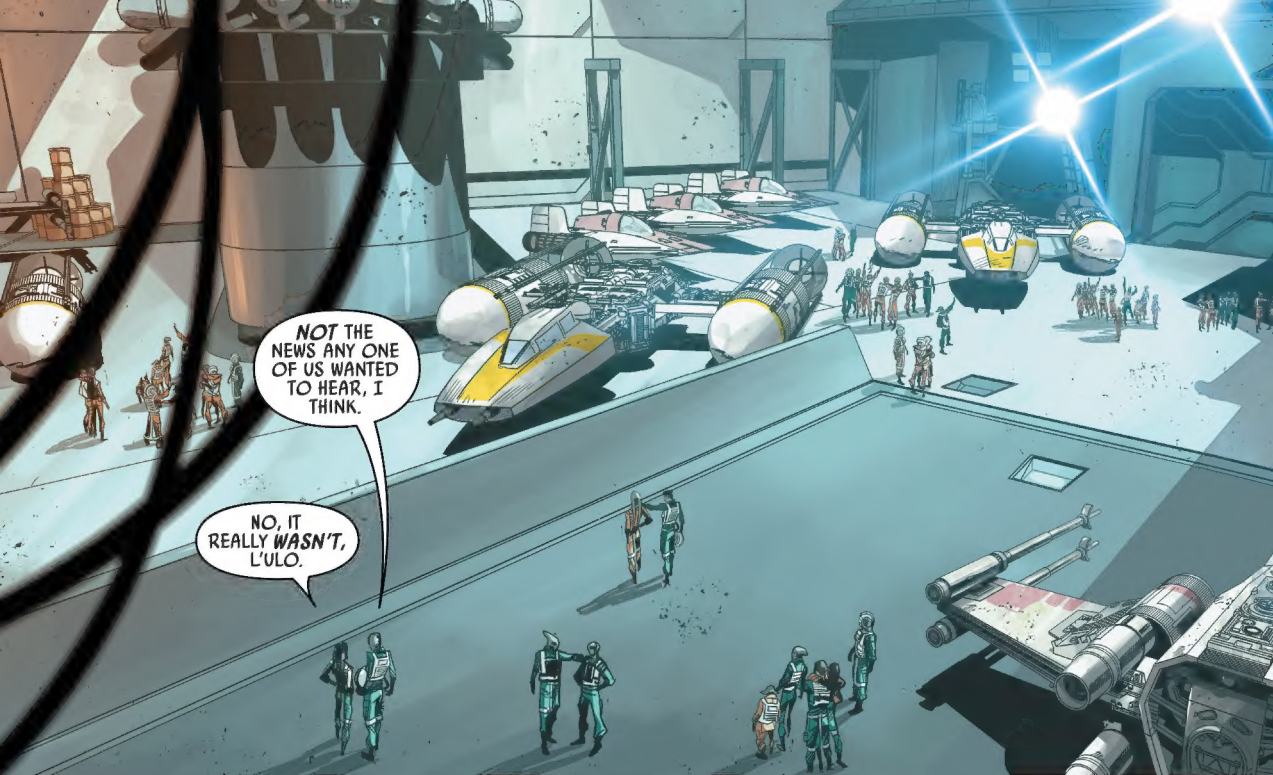
...THOUGH
THE PURPOSE
OF MANY **OTHERS**
IS FAR LESS
CLEAR.

YOUR
EFFORTS IN
COMBATING OPERATION:
CINDER HAVE BEEN
INSTRUMENTAL IN SAVING
COUNTLESS INNOCENT
LIVES.

THAT SAID, AS
MUCH AS ADMIRAL ACKBAR
AND I WISH WE COULD TELL
YOU THE **END** IS AT HAND...



...WE SEE **NO**
RESPIRE FROM
HOSTILITIES AT
THIS TIME...



NOT THE NEWS ANY ONE OF US WANTED TO HEAR, I THINK.

NO, IT REALLY WASN'T, L'ULO.



YOU EVER THINK THAT THIS IS NEVER GOING TO END?

AH, SHARA, YOU CAN'T THINK THAT WAY.

OTHERWISE WE'RE JUST FIGHTING FOR THE SAKE OF THE FIGHT, RIGHT?



I UNDERSTAND YOUR HUSBAND PUT HIS PAPERWORK IN AND THAT IT'S BEEN APPROVED.

I TOOK THE LIBERTY OF SUBMITTING YOURS.



YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE DONE THAT, CAPTAIN.

SHARA, YOU AND KES HAVE DONE MORE THAN YOUR FAIR SHARE.

IT'S MUSTERING OUT, IT'S NOT DESERTION. BESIDES, IT'S ALREADY DONE, SHOULD BE CLEARED WITHIN THE WEEK.



IT'S PAST TIME THAT YOU AND YOUR FAMILY GOT TO LIVE THE LIVES YOU'VE BEEN FIGHTING FOR.

TIME FOR YOU TO PICK OUT A WORLD TO SETTLE ON, LIEUTENANT.



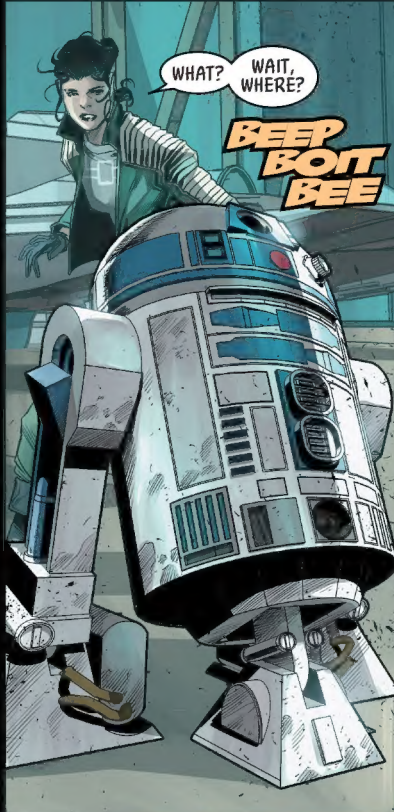
YES, SIR.

BEED DEET BOIP



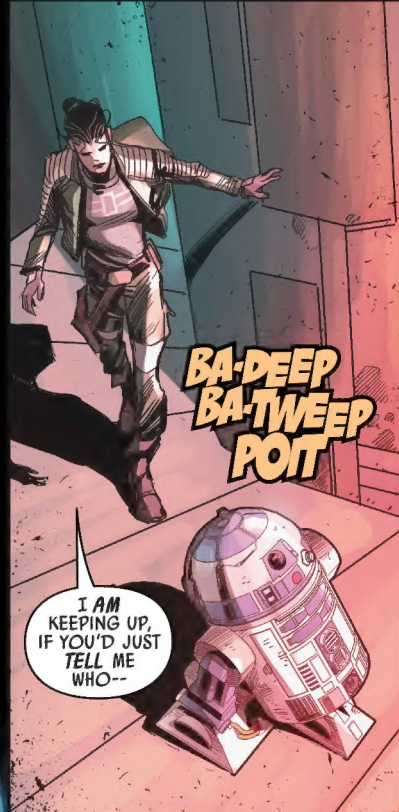
YOU'RE TALKING TO ME?

DA-DEET
DWEET
BOIT BEE



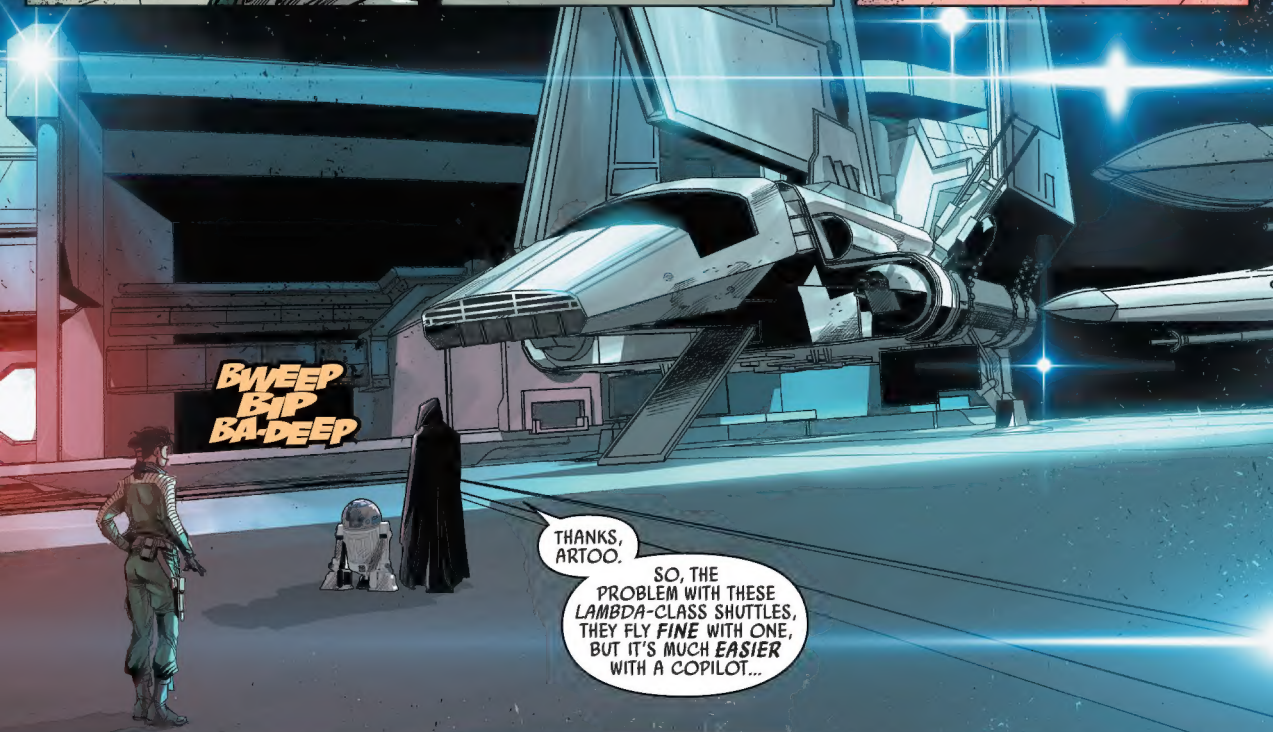
WHAT? WAIT, WHERE?

BEEP
BOIT
BEE



BA-DEEP
BA-TWEEP
POIT

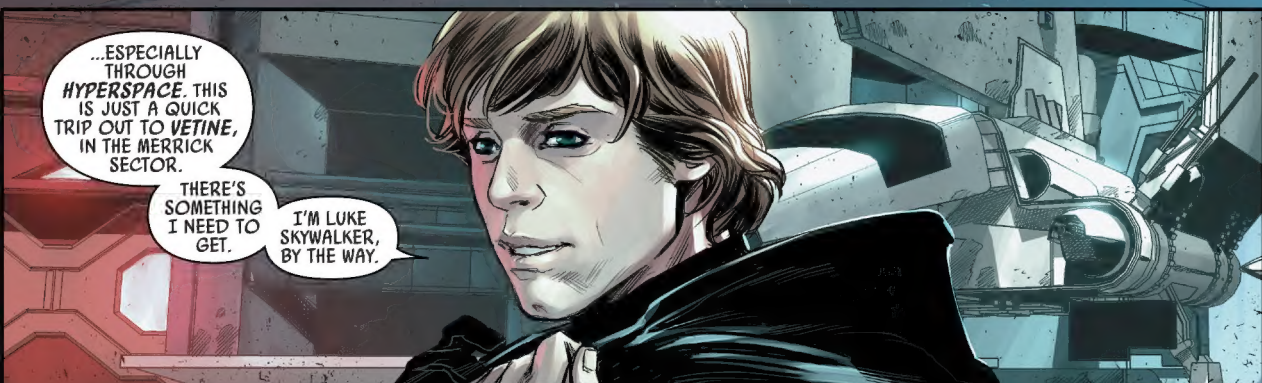
I AM KEEPING UP, IF YOU'D JUST TELL ME WHO--



BWEEP
BIP
BA-DEEP

THANKS, ARTOO.

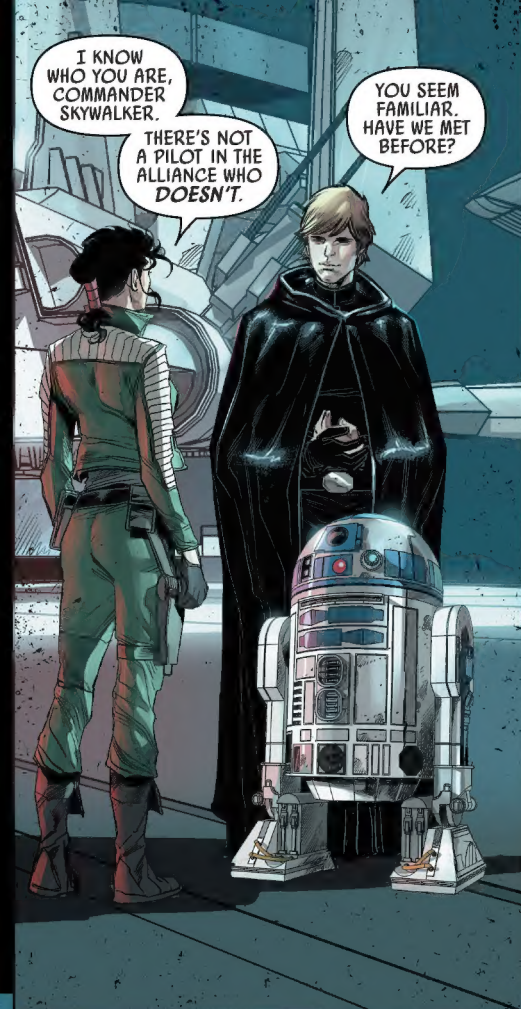
SO, THE PROBLEM WITH THESE LAMBDA-CLASS SHUTTLES, THEY FLY *FINE* WITH ONE, BUT IT'S MUCH *EASIER* WITH A COPILOT...



...ESPECIALLY THROUGH *HYPERSPACE*. THIS IS JUST A QUICK TRIP OUT TO *VETINE*, IN THE *MERRICK* SECTOR.

THERE'S SOMETHING I NEED TO GET.

I'M LUKE SKYWALKER, BY THE WAY.



I KNOW WHO YOU ARE, COMMANDER SKYWALKER.

THERE'S NOT A PILOT IN THE ALLIANCE WHO DOESN'T.

YOU SEEM FAMILIAR. HAVE WE MET BEFORE?



I, AH... ALMOST SHOT YOU DOWN DURING THE BATTLE OF ENDOR.

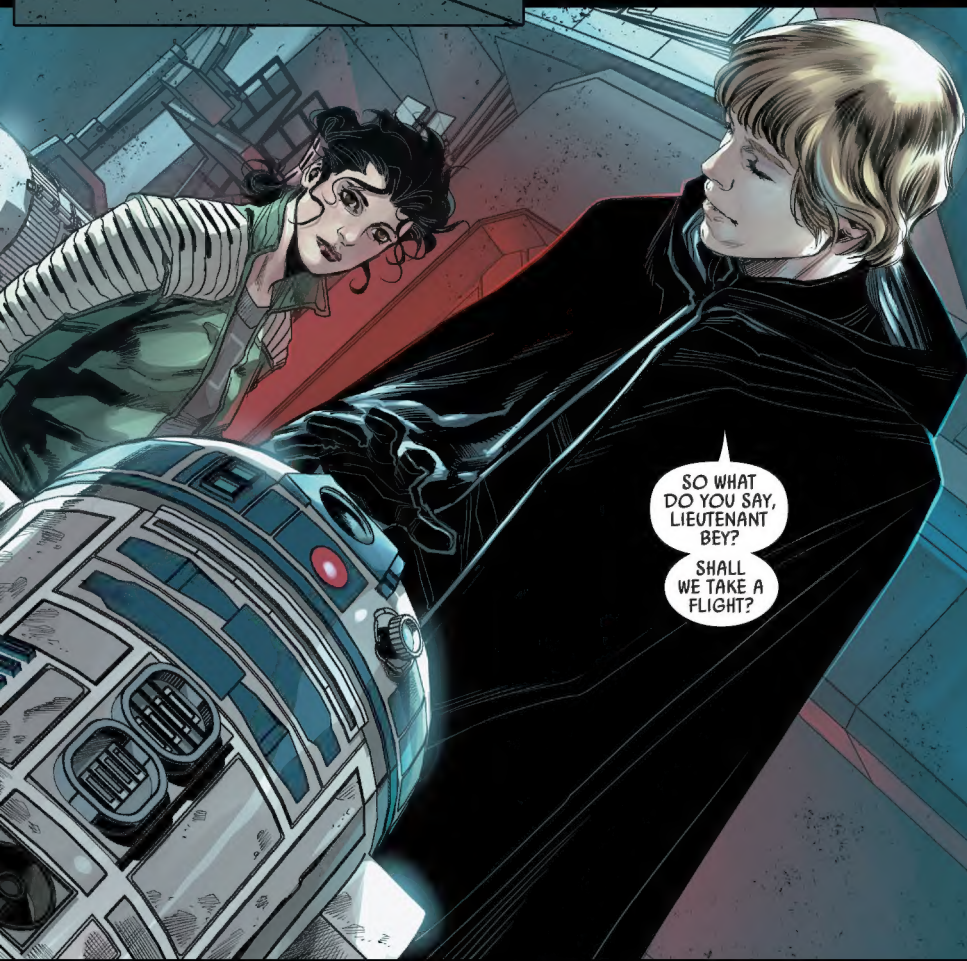
LIEUTENANT SHARA BEY.

YOU'RE THE PILOT WHO FLEW WITH LEIA ON NABOO.



I SEND ARTOO TO FIND ME A PILOT, AND HERE YOU ARE.

INTERESTING.

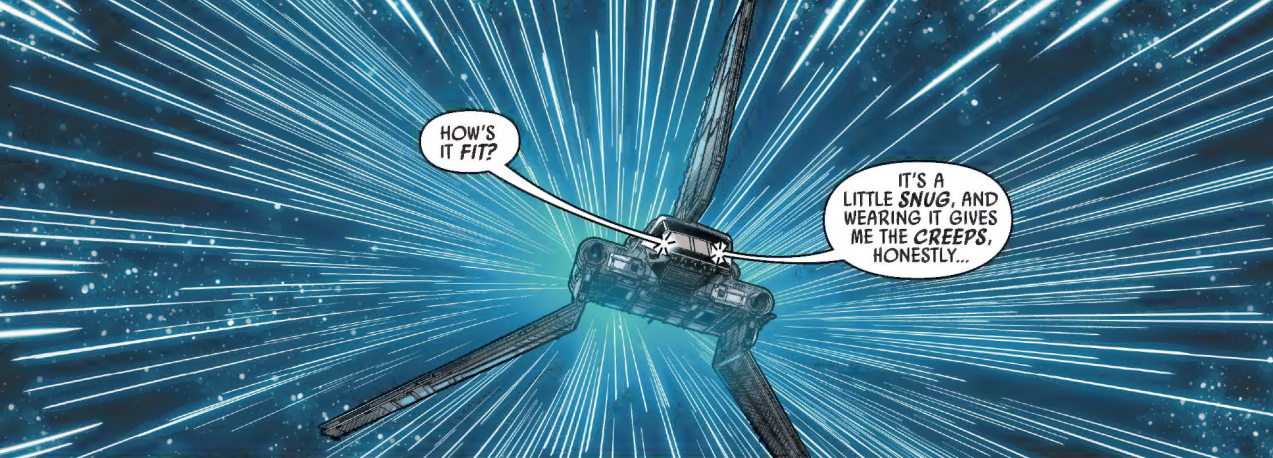


SO WHAT DO YOU SAY, LIEUTENANT BEY?

SHALL WE TAKE A FLIGHT?



I'D BE HONORED, COMMANDER.



HOW'S IT FIT?

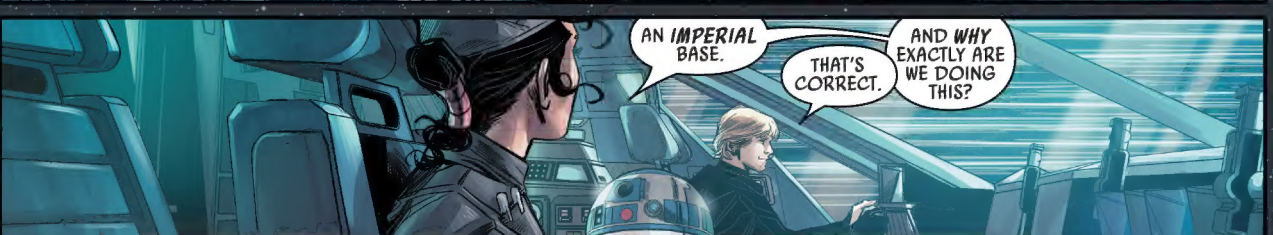
IT'S A LITTLE *SNUG*, AND WEARING IT GIVES ME THE *CREEPS*, HONESTLY...



...YOU GOING TO TELL ME WHY I'M DRESSED UP AS AN *ISB* OFFICER?

YOU'RE ACTUALLY DRESSED UP AS A *SPECIFIC* ISB OFFICER. A WOMAN NAMED COMMANDER ALECIA BECK.

YOU'RE GOING TO GET US INTO THE BASE ON VETINE.



AN IMPERIAL BASE.

THAT'S CORRECT.

AND WHY EXACTLY ARE WE DOING THIS?



BECAUSE IN THE *LAB* AT THE HEART OF THAT BASE IS SOMETHING THE EMPEROR *STOLE* A LONG TIME AGO.

WE'RE TAKING IT *BACK*.



WE'RE JUST GOING TO WALK IN AND WALK OUT AGAIN?

WE OBTAINED COMMANDER BECK'S *CLEARANCES* DURING THE RAID AT THE WRECH OF TAYRON.

THAT SHOULD GET US THROUGH THE *DOOR*. AS FOR THE *REST*...

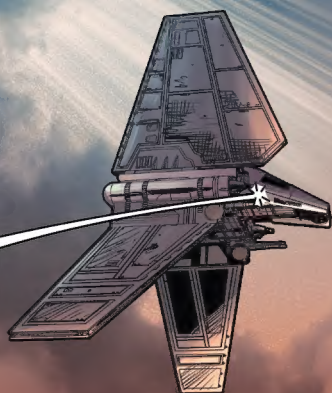


...I'M GOING TO *TRUST* IN THE *FORCE*.

VETINE
FLIGHT CONTROL
TO UNIDENTIFIED
T-4A.

TRANSMIT
TRANSPONDER
AND CLEARANCE
OR BE SHOT
DOWN.

VETINE
FLIGHT CONTROL,
THIS IS THE SHUTTLE
ANTARRA...



...ISB
COMMANDER
BECK
ABOARD.

YOU WILL
STAND DOWN AT
ONCE AND GRANT
CLEARANCE FOR
LANDING.

STAND BY,
ANTARRA, WE ARE
RECEIVING YOUR
CLEARANCE
NOW...



COMMANDER,
OUR APOLOGIES.
SECURITY HAS OBVIOUSLY
BEEN INCREASED LATELY,
AS I'M SURE YOU
UNDERSTAND.

COMMANDANT
HURRON SENDS
HIS COMPLIMENTS,
AND WILL MEET YOU
AT THE LANDING
PAD.

I SHOULD
EXPECT
NOTHING
LESS...



...BECK
OUT.

YOU'VE
GOT A MASTERY
OF IMPERIAL
ARROGANCE,
LIEUTENANT.
VERY NICE.

WHAT DO
I TELL THE
COMMANDANT?

THAT
YOU'RE HERE
TO INSPECT THE
SECURITY ON
THE LAB.

AND
WHEN HE
ASKS ABOUT
YOU?

IT'S EASY,
YOU JUST ACT
LIKE EVERYONE ELSE
IS A BUG YOU'RE
TOO BUSY TO
SQUISH.

I'M YOUR
BODYGUARD.





COMMANDER
BECK, THIS IS...
UNEXPECTED.

GIVEN THE
CURRENT STATE OF
REBEL ACTIVITY, I'D HAVE
THOUGHT YOU'D HAVE
SENT SOME **WARNING**
OF YOUR PLAN
TO VISIT.



IF YOU HAD RECEIVED WORD,
COMMANDANT, THIS WOULD HARDLY
QUALIFY AS A **SURPRISE**
INSPECTION.

I WISH TO SEE THE
SECURITY ON THE **LABS**,
IMMEDIATELY.



WON'T YOU INTRODUCE ME TO
YOUR **ENTOURAGE**
FIRST?

IT'S A
DROID AND MY
SECURITY OFFICER,
COMMANDANT.

THEIR
NAMES ARE
IRRELEVANT.

IF YOU'LL
FOLLOW ME,
COMMANDER
BECK.



I ADMIT
I'M **SURPRISED**
YOU'RE HERE.

I'D HAVE
THOUGHT THE
ISB WOULD BE
MORE CONCERNED
WITH DESTROYING
THE REBELLION,
ESPECIALLY
NOW...

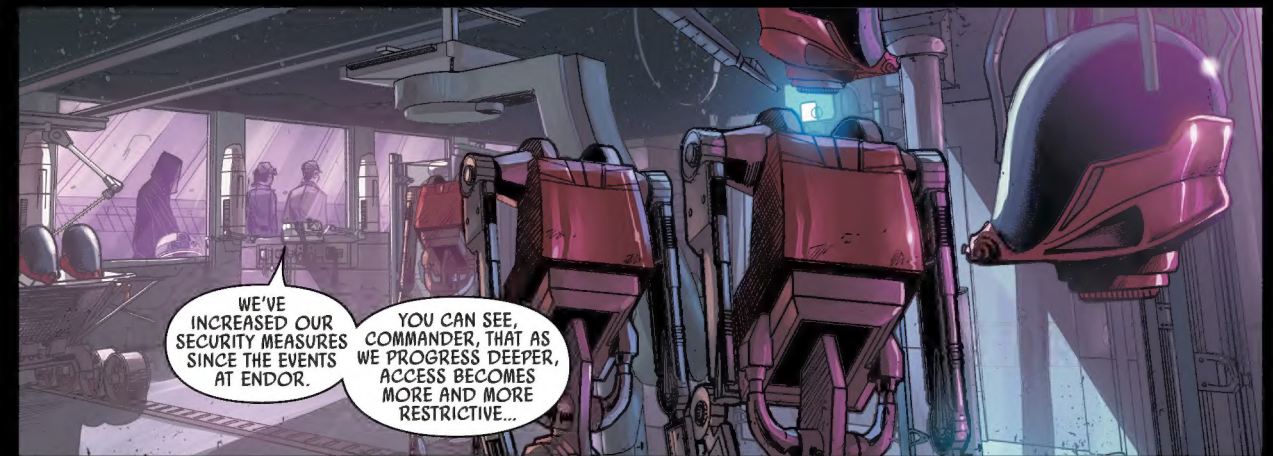


...RATHER THAN
LAUNCHING **SURPRISE**
INSPECTIONS OF
IMPERIAL **RESEARCH**
FACILITIES.

I WILL
ATTEND TO
MY CONCERNS,
COMMANDANT,
AS I SEE FIT.

THE SAME AS
I EXPECT YOU
TO ATTEND TO
YOURS.

OF COURSE,
COMMANDER.



WE'VE
INCREASED OUR
SECURITY MEASURES
SINCE THE EVENTS
AT ENDOR.

YOU CAN SEE,
COMMANDER, THAT AS
WE PROGRESS DEEPER,
ACCESS BECOMES
MORE AND MORE
RESTRICTIVE...



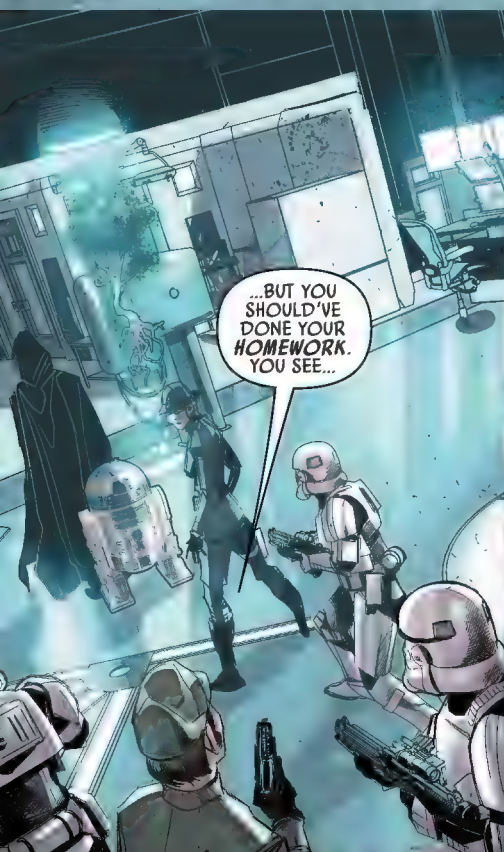
...UNTIL WE ARRIVE AT THE
INNER LAB, HERE.

THERE ARE
ONLY **TWO** PEOPLE
IN THE **GALAXY** WHO
COULD FREELY ACCESS
THIS ROOM...



...MYSELF
AND THE EMPEROR
HIMSELF. I AM ALL
THAT REMAINS.

UNTIL
NOW, I NEVER
UNDERSTOOD THE **NEED**
FOR SUCH PRECAUTIONS,
TO BE PERFECTLY **HONEST**.
ALL OF THIS...





CLEARLY
YOU KNOW.

WHAT MAKES
THESE LITTLE *TREES*
SO *SPECIAL* THAT
YOU TWO REBELS WOULD
TRY TO BLUFF YOUR
WAY IN HERE TO
STEAL THEM?



THESE ARE
ALL THAT REMAIN
OF THE *TREE* THAT GREW
AT THE HEART OF THE
JEDI TEMPLE ON
CORUSCANT.



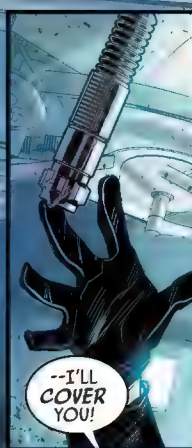
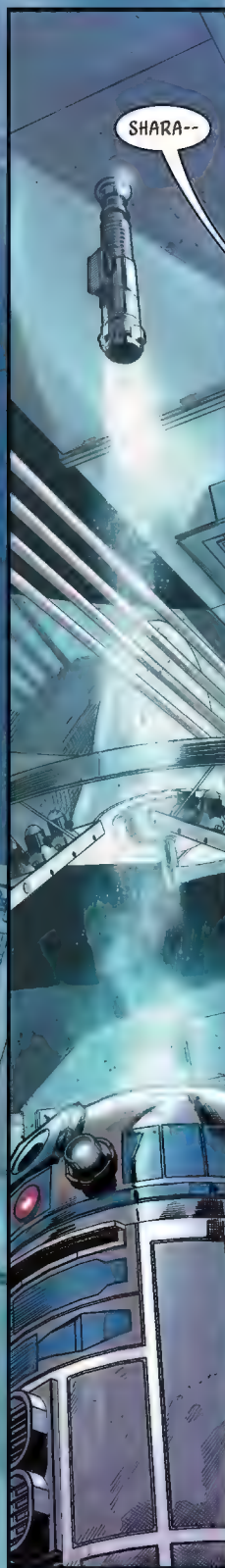
THE
FORCE
IS WITH
THEM.



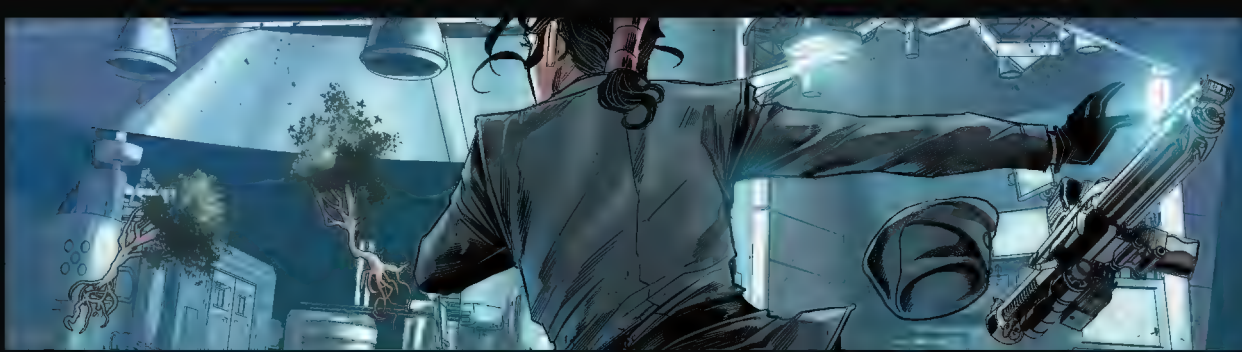
THE FORCE IS
MEANINGLESS.
AND THE
JEDI ARE
EXTINCT.

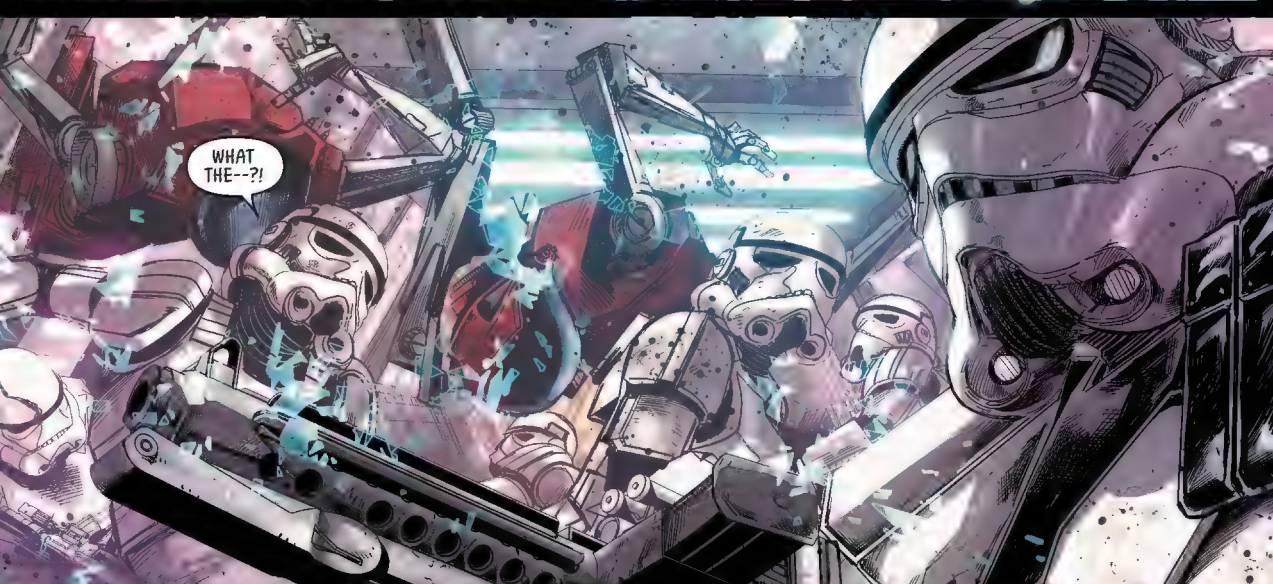
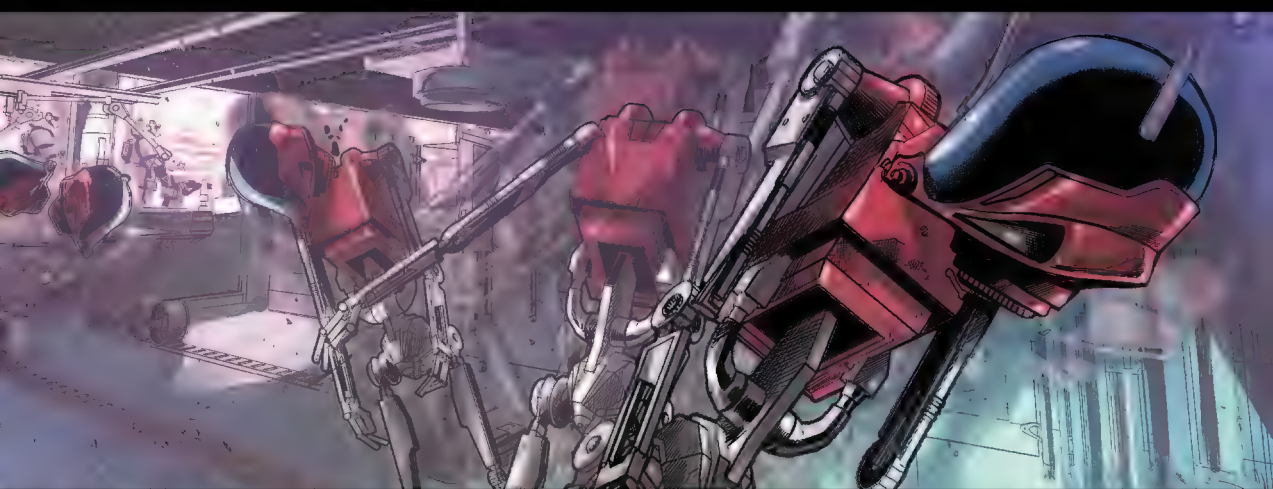


YOU
COULDN'T BE
MORE WRONG,
COMMANDANT--

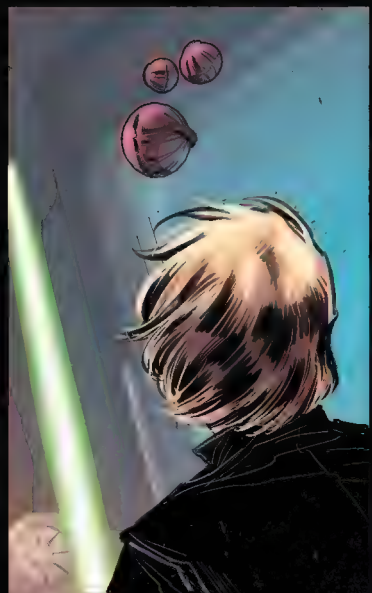


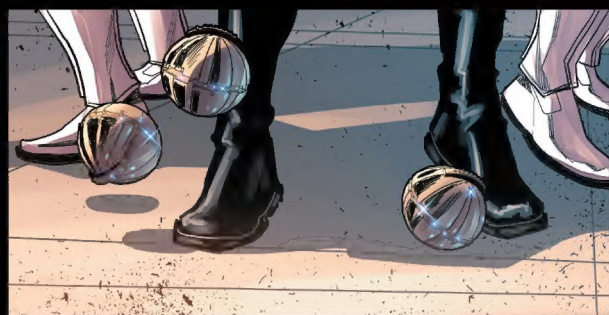
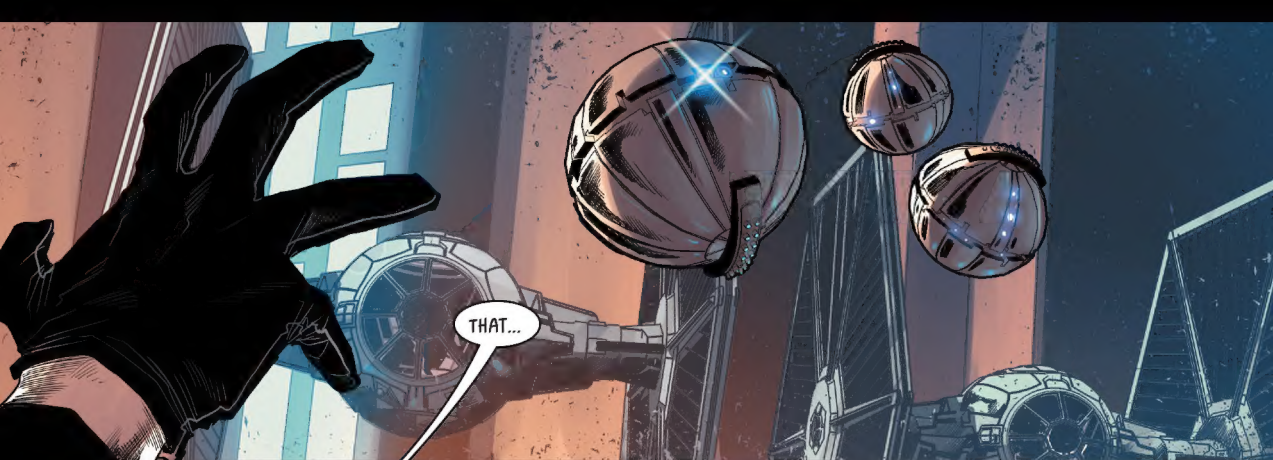














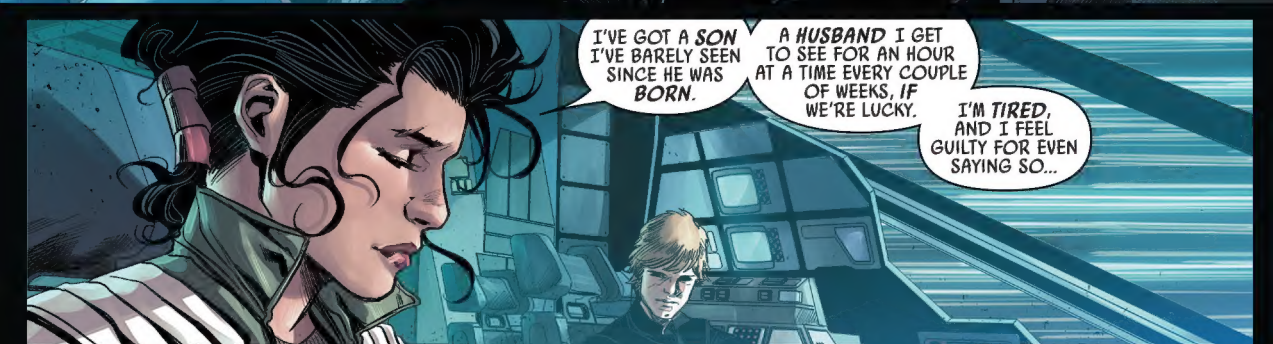
ARTOO
OVERHEARD
YOUR CONVERSATION
WITH CAPTAIN
L'ULO...



...SOMETHING
ABOUT MUSTERING
OUT OF THE
SERVICE?

I'M STILL
TRYING TO
DECIDE IF
THAT'S WHAT
I WANT.

SEARCH
YOUR
FEELINGS.



I'VE GOT A SON
I'VE BARELY SEEN
SINCE HE WAS
BORN.

A HUSBAND I GET
TO SEE FOR AN HOUR
AT A TIME EVERY COUPLE
OF WEEKS, IF
WE'RE LUCKY.

I'M TIRED,
AND I FEEL
GUILTY FOR EVEN
SAYING SO...



...I FEEL LIKE I'M
ABANDONING THE
REBELLION.

BUT IF THE
COST OF OUR
STRUGGLE IS THE LIVES
WE FOUGHT TO PROTECT,
THE FUTURE WE
HOPED TO SEE...

...THEN
WHAT IS IT WE
WERE FIGHTING
FOR?



I ONLY
BRING IT UP
BECAUSE I DIDN'T
THINK THERE'D BE
TWO TREES.

ONE OF
THEM IS
SPOKEN FOR,
OBVIOUSLY...

"...BUT I'D LIKE IT
IF THE OTHER ONE
FOUND A GOOD
HOME...."



